

i don't want to know your name (it'll ruin the surprise)

by FateChica

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Summary:

"You're something else, MadMax."

"Don't you forget it, Stalker."

A chance meeting on a subway platform changes *everything*.

i don't want to know your name (it'll ruin the surprise)

Author's Note:

Ok, so, this isn't "love you like a love song". This idea came to me literally 3 hours ago and I had to get it out.

There's not nearly enough Lumax content and I want to help change that.

She's standing on the subway platform when she meets him for the first time.

Not that she knows she's going to meet him – Max might be super awesome, but she can't see the future.

No, at the moment, Max Mayfield is standing as she waits for the L, book in one hand, drawstring of her hoodie twirling in the other, earbuds in, drowning out the noise around her. There might as well be no one else on the platform for how little Max is paying attention.

She's peripherally aware that people are standing on either side and maybe, *maybe* if she knew what was about to happen, she'd pay more attention.

Something slams into her left shoulder, sends her careening to the other side. One of her earbuds rips out from her ear, dangling uselessly.

Hands, large, warm even through her hoodie, grab her, catch her by the arms, holding her steady.

Hot annoyance flares in Max's veins and she's ready to turn to the asshole who ran into her and give the dick weasel a piece of her mind when a voice interrupts her thoughts.

"Hey, you ok?"

Voice, deep and concerned – the person who caught her.

Max looks up.

Oh.

He's looking down at her, brows raised and furrowed, concern in his dark eyes. Full lips, pulled just slightly upward in a disarming smile. Dark skin that looks smooth to the touch. Hair cropped short.

Max blushes, embarrassed (*yes, embarrassed, no other reason!*). "Uh, yeah," she says, pulling herself together. "Assholes, am I right?"

He smiles full on, letting out a small laugh. "Dude straight on ran into you. I'd say more than an asshole."

Max grins. "Well, I was calling him a 'dick weasel' in my head, so...."

This earns her a full on laugh. "Dick weasel," he says with a shake of his head. "I like it." His face sobers. "So, you sure you're ok?"

He's still holding her and Max nods. "Yeah, I'm fine. Thanks for catching me. I'd really hate to have eaten it on a subway platform."

He lets go and Max *does not* miss the warmth of his touch. Nope, not at all. "Nobody wants to eat it on a subway platform. Just a fact."

Max has a reply on the tip of her tongue, but the sound of the train approaches and the crowds jostle to get closer to the edge of the platform and, before Max knows it, her savior is nowhere to be found.

Dammit.

"How are you settling in?" El's voice is tinny in Max's ear as she walks down the street to catch her train.

"Ok, I think," Max says. She's been in Chicago a week and still doesn't know if she can call this place home quite yet. But El lives only a 5 minute walk away from Max's new apartment, so Max thinks it won't be long until she's fully accepted her new city.

“Are you unpacked, at least?” Max can hear the sounds of El moving around her own apartment, bags rustling, other voices.

“Mostly?” Max says. “It’s different from my old apartment in SF, so I’m not sure where everything goes yet.”

“Hmm, you’ll figure it out,” El says. “You always do.”

“Hey, did you ask her?” This voice is new, muffled, deeper.

“Not yet,” El replies. There’s some more rustling noises, a muffled kiss.

Max rolls her eyes. “Is that Mike?”

“No, I picked up a random dude on my way home from work. Going to see how this goes. He could be the one!”

“Hey!” Max hears Mike exclaim and she can’t help but picture the look of indignation that she knows is spread over Mike Wheeler’s face. Mike Wheeler, who Max has only met a few times whenever she’s come to visit El. Mike Wheeler, who El met in college and fell madly in love with, who stole El’s heart with his besotted gazes and sheer nerdiness. Mike Wheeler, who asked El to marry him a year ago, who El will be marrying in 6 short months.

“Love you, boo!” El giggles.

“Yeah, yeah...” Mike says, just barely audible.

“God, you two are gross,” Max says.

“Oh, hush you,” El says, voice prim and teasing. “One day, you’ll fall in love, too, Maxine.”

“Hey, I thought I told you back in freshman year to knock off with the ‘Maxine’ bullshit,” Max says, equally teasing. It’s a familiar routine, one that started in high school and has lasted through college and into adulthood, 14 years later. “So, what were you going to ask me?”

“Oh!” El says, remembering. “We’re having a dinner party in a few

weeks, a ‘yay, winter’s fucking over’ celebration.”

Max shivers at the reminders of the temperatures. If her new job didn’t pay so well, if El hadn’t already lived in Chicago, there’d be no fucking way Max’d move out to a city where your windshield wipers fucking froze to your windshield, where she’d need to understand on a primal level the words “lake effect”. “Yeah, sure, sign me up. I could use more victims.”

Max can somehow hear El’s eye roll on the phone. “You know, if you didn’t call all your friends ‘victims’, you might have more of them.”

“But then, how would I know who truly appreciates my humor? Only people who find it funny would stick around. That’s how I know they’re worth it.”

“You have fucked up priorities,” El says. “Hey, I gotta get going. We need to figure out what to do for dinner.”

“Kay, tell Mike I say hi.”

“Will do. Love you, Thing 2.” Thing 1 and Thing 2, nicknames Hop gave them in high school, amused at the propensity for trouble his daughter and his daughter’s best friend could get into.

“Love you too, Thing 1.”

Max hangs up the phone and enters the subway platform. She glances around, hoping to find her savior. But no dice.

But then, a few minutes later, a tap on her shoulder. It’s crowded again and Max figures it’s probably someone asking her to make room.

But Max turns and it’s *him*. She smiles. “Meeting together like this again?” she says, putting on fake shock. “What *will* the neighbors say?”

He laughs, shaking his head. “You’re something else, you know that?”

“S’what everyone tells me,” she says. “So, I take it you work nearby?”

“Yeah, I’m, uh, a bioengineer. You?”

Wow, handsome *and* smart? Max smiles. “Research librarian.”

He grins, giving her jeans and Doc Martins a once over. “Librarian, huh? Not what I would have pictured.”

Max rolls her eyes. “Yeah, you can get that ‘hot librarian’ fantasy out of your head now, if you don’t mind.”

“Not what I was thinking.” His smile turns mischievous. “But now I am.”

Max blushes. “Oh, ha ha,” she says.

Then the train shows up and, *again*, she loses sight of him, lost in the crowd of people.

Next time, *dammit*. Next time she’s going to get his number.

She doesn’t manage to get his number.

Not for a while, at least.

But it becomes a game.

She spots him the third time and this time she’s tapping him on the shoulder. “So, you could have just told me you were stalking me,” she says when he turns around, smile stretching her lips.

His eyebrows arch into his forehead. “Stalking you? I’ve been taking this train for months. If anything, you’re stalking *me*.”

Max giggles. “Whatever you say, Stalker.”

He shakes his head, sighing, but he’s smiling. “You’re mad, you know that, right?”

This has Max smiling like a fool. “They don’t call me MadMax for nothing.”

He laughs. “Funny, I imagine you as more of a Furiosa, instead.”

“You imagine me, do you?”

He blushes so hard, Max can see it through the darkness of his skin. “I didn’t say that.”

Max grins. “You didn’t *not* say that,” she says, punctuating her point with a tilt of her head, a quirk of her eyebrow.

It’s teasing and flirting and fun and Max doesn’t mind it so much when she doesn’t get his number this time.

Because they keep running into each other and the dance continues, picking up each day after work.

Max finds herself counting down the minutes until the day ends and she can race down to the subway platform, eager to see him again. God, she doesn’t even know his *name*. But this game they have going on, this dance, is filled with such beautiful tension that Max is willing to let it go on for as long as it needs.

It’ll break eventually.

“So, I think I met someone.”

“You think?” El looks at her, eyebrows rising into her forehead.

It’s Sunday and Max is joining Mike and El for brunch at a restaurant near both their apartments.

“Wait, there’s someone who’s willing to put up with your bullshit?” Mike teases from where he’s sitting, leaning back in his chair, arm slung behind El.

“Fuck you, Wheeler.”

“Sorry, that’s El’s job.”

Max can’t help but smile. She loves this tit-for-tat sibling bullshit she and Mike use to express their still growing friendship. He gives as good as he gets, at any rate, which is more than she can say for most people.

“Wait, I’m still stuck on you *think* you met someone,” El says. “How?”

Max takes a sip of her mimosa. God bless bottomless mimos. “Well, for starters, I don’t know his name.”

“Oookay,” El says, confused and digging for more info at the same time. God, she’s adorable. It’s part of why Max loves her so much.

“Yeah, we take the same train home from work,” Max continues. “It’s...I don’t know. We talk and flirt and he’s really cute.”

“How’d you two meet?” El asks.

“Some douche canoe knocked me over while I was waiting for the train and this guy caught me, made sure I was ok.”

Mike nods. “Well, good, at least he’s a gentleman. One of you two needs to be.”

Max sticks her tongue out, feeling her oh-so-mature 28 years. “Yeah, well, now I keep running into him. It’s become a thing.”

“Do you have his number, at least?” El asks, like she can’t believe Max is just...letting this go on like she is.

“Nope,” Max says with a smile. “It’ll happen eventually, Ellie. Not all of us are just willing to grab some guy’s phone and program in their number before sending themselves a text message.” She looks over at Mike, who’s grinning.

“Hey, if she hadn’t done that, it would have taken me months to make my move,” Mike says. “When El wants something, she goes and gets it.”

Max wrinkles her nose. “Please, I don’t need the details of your sex

life while I'm trying to eat, thanks."

There's a bit of spluttering from the couple across from her, which makes Max laugh.

But El sighs. "Well, as long as you're happy. But I want to meet him eventually, ok?"

"You got it, dude."

Turns out, though.

El already knows him.

Not that Max knows that. Not yet.

It's the day of El and Mike's dinner party. "Dress nice-ish!" is what El tells Max.

"Nice-ish," Max grumbles as she sorts through her wardrobe. "Please." Not everyone can be so lucky to look like a freaking model, *El*. Girl makes everything look good, with her tanned skin and lush brown hair and svelte figure.

No, Max has to contend with bright ginger hair, pale skin, and hips that are just a bit too wide. So it limits her options.

But, Max eventually settles on a pair of tight, dark jeans that make her ass look great and a teal, keyhole blouse that shows off just enough of her boobs to make her feel fantastic. She pairs it with her favorite pair of black kitten heels and a pair of gold dangle earrings and, with her hair pinned back and face lightly made up, Max feels ready to go. She remembers to grab the bottle of wine she bought as a gift – her favorite Merlot – before she's heading out the door.

It's not a long walk to El and Mike's apartment and, before Max knows it, she's ringing the doorbell.

Mike answers the door, wearing jeans and a white button down.

“Hey, you’re here.”

It’s a little bit early, Max knows, and she grins. “Well, I like to be fashionably early so I can size up the competition as they walk in the door. Gotta know who I might need to throw down with and I like to start from a position of power. Nothing says ‘don’t mess me with, bitch’ by already staking my claim by getting here first.”

Mike laughs and steps aside. “Well, you’re the first one here. El’s in the kitchen, getting some stuff ready last minute.”

Max hands off the bottle of wine as she steps inside. “For you, thanks for hosting,” she says. “I’ll go see if she needs help.”

El’s, of course, wearing the most adorable dress Max has ever seen – dark red, almost burgundy, square neckline, flaring out into a gently full skirt – as she bustles around the kitchen barefoot. There’s a quick exchange of hugs and bright hellos before Max slides in to help, arranging food on platters and just generally being a second pair of hands while she and El sip from glasses filled with a light sauv blanc.

The doorbell rings several times, the apartment begins to fill, and El nudges Max to help her carry things out to the living room. She’s laughing with El, looking over her shoulder at her friend as she walks out, and is not really looking at the group of people who’ve assembled. Until-

“MadMax?”

Max whips her head around and sees *him*, standing there, talking to Mike, each of them holding a beer. Her jaw drops. “Stalker?” What the fuck is he doing here?

“Wait,” Mike says. “You two know each other, Lucas?”

Max is too shocked for words. *Lucas. His name is Lucas.*

“Uh, yeah,” Lucas says. “We, uh, take the same train home. I’ve seen her a few times on the platform.”

Max watches as Mike’s eyes widen, putting the pieces together. “Oh.” A pause. “*Oh.*” Max is looking at Mike, pleading him with her eyes to

not say anything. “Hey, um, Max, let me take that from you.”

Max lets him and she can *feel* El’s questioning gaze burning into her from behind. “Thanks,” she says.

El comes into Max’s vision and the look she’s giving Max is filled with the strongest “*Later*” ever in the history of time.

But Max finds herself being carried over to where Lucas is standing, her traitorous feet taking control.

Lucas is smiling down at her, though, so Max supposes it’s ok. “So, your name is really Max, huh?”

Max grins, heart beating wildly in her chest. “Never said it wasn’t, *Lucas*,” she says, emphasizing his name.

The way he smiles at her makes her want to kiss him *so bad*.

In due time.

By the end of the night, his number’s in her phone, hers in his.

He’s still “Stalker” in her contacts, so, she’s not letting that go, not with the way she collects nicknames like magpies collect shiny things.

But Lucas is a nice name and she almost lets go of the habit. Just for him.

...Man, she’s so fucked.

Instead of just seeing him after work while they wait for the train, Max now sees Lucas what feels like *everywhere*.

The store, the café she likes to go to that’s just down the street from

her apartment, Mike and El's apartment where everyone hangs out-

(True to form, El introduces Max to Mike's friends, each one of them as nerdy as him. She's never felt more at home with a group of people in her entire life.)

-just *everywhere*.

Of course, they still run into each other on the subway platform after work, her still calling him Stalker, him still calling her MadMax.

But it's *more* now. Lucas looks at her and Max feels her heart skip a beat. Lucas brushes up against her and Max wants to hold him close and never let go. Lucas says something into her ear and Max wants to drag him into a secluded corner to have her wicked way with him.

Lucas smiles at her and Max wants to give him her heart.

It gets to the point where El starts giving her pointed looks – *just make your move already* – and there are more than a few under-the-breath comments about sexual tension and “getting it out of your system” from both Three Amigos (read: Mike, Dustin, and Will).

But Max has never felt this before, isn't sure what to do, exactly.

How do you let someone know they've become part of you without it being super awkward?

Luckily, as it turns out, the universe takes care of that for her.

It's August, 5 months after they first met. Lucas is walking her home after having dinner at El and Mike's apartment, going over various wedding details, seeing how as Max is the Maid of Honor and Lucas is the Best Man.

“So, you got Mike's Bachelor Party all planned out?” Max asks.

Lucas grins. “Mostly. Just trying to decide the right level of embarrassment to level at the fucker. How's the planning for El's

Bachelorette Party?”

Max smiles, letting out a laugh that's almost a cackle. “Penises. Penises for as far as the eye can see. I've hired a male stripper and *everything's* going to be penis-themed. It's going to be *awesome*.”

Lucas laughs. “God, that explains the looks El gives you whenever you mention it.”

Max snickers. “Yeah, well, she knew what she was getting into when she asked me to be her Maid of Honor.” Her smile softens. “But, I also have a spa day planned for the day after, just me, her, Nancy, and Joyce. Don't tell her that part, though. That's a surprise.”

Lucas smiles, expression fond and awed. It makes Max feel dizzy... though that could also be the humidity, which make her feel like she's swimming, hair sticking to her skin, making her feel loose and languid.

Then, Chicago weather does what Chicago weather gonna do: it turns on a dime.

The sky explodes, the clouds open up, and sheets of rain come pouring down. In a flash, Max is drenched.

Lucas grabs her arm. “C'mon!” he says over the noise of the rain and pulls her down the street.

Max lets out a whooping laugh and follows, the two of them running for her apartment building, which is a block down the street.

They're both breathing hard, laughing, by the time they step under the awning in front of the entrance to Max's apartment building and Max can't help the way she smiles up at Lucas, feeling light and giddy and *happy*. He's smiling down at her, shaking his head with incredulity, standing only inches from her.

And then he's kissing her, one hand pressed against the small of her back, the other pushing her hair over her shoulder, fingers trailing against the skin exposed by the thin tank top she's wearing.

Max pushes up into the kiss, opening her mouth beneath his, her

hands going to grab him by the waist.

Lucas groans into the kiss and Max knows, *just knows*, that she's going to have him naked in her apartment within the hour.

She breaks the kiss and looks up at him, hoping that she looks as seductive as she feels. By the way he's looking down at her, pupils blown wide in the dying storm light, Max figures she's succeeding. "You know, I could use some help getting out of these wet clothes."

If possible, Lucas' gaze darkens even more. "Yeah?" His voice is ragged, deep. It sets off butterflies in Max's stomach.

"Yeah. I mean, you wouldn't want me getting sick, would you?"

"No, wouldn't want that."

It's only minutes later when the door to Max's apartment closes behind her and Max finds herself pressed up against it, trapped by the heat of Lucas' body as he kisses her.

Max lets her hand dip under the fabric of his soaked t-shirt, his skin warm to the touch and just as smooth as she thought it might be.

Moments later, his shirt is on the floor.

And then hers is, his hands touching every inch of exposed skin, setting off trails of fire wherever he touches.

They continue to shed clothes as they make their way to her bedroom and then they're naked and in her bed and it's *perfect*.

Lucas touches her like he was born knowing how to, setting off a symphony of gasps and moans and cries. His skin against hers feels like heaven and she cannot stop touching him, cannot stop relishing the way he feels against her, on top of her, beneath her.

And after, when they're finished, both of them spent, surrounded in the warm afterglow, Max thinks *this is it*.

Lucas has one arm draped across her belly, fingers curling into her bare hip. His head's propped up with his other arm and he's looking

down at her like she's everything he's ever wanted.

Max smiles, knowing she looks like a love-sick fool. "So, tell me, Stalker. Did that live up to your hot librarian fantasies?" she asks, giggling.

Lucas rolls his eyes and lets out an exaggerated groan. "God, you really put the "mad" in MadMax, don't you?"

Max leans up and presses a kiss to the underside of Lucas' chin. "Psh, always."

He smiles down at her and Max feels her stomach do another swoop. She hopes it always feels like this. "You're something else, MadMax."

"Don't you forget it, Stalker."

And he doesn't.

Ever.

Author's Note:

So, how was this? Honestly, writing it was a trip. I love Max; she's such a hoot to write.

I'm not happy with how it just *ends* but I couldn't figure out a graceful exit so *shrugs*.

Thinking of doing this from Lucas' POV. What say you all?